Rugops

Rugops (meaning "wrinkle face") is a genus of abelisaurid theropod dinosaur that inhabited what is now Africa approximately 95 million years ago, during the Cenomanian stage of the Late Cretaceous.

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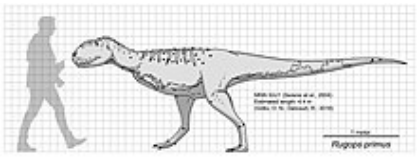
Description

Restoration of *Rugops* feeding on *Onchopristis*



Size comparison

Though known only from a partial skull found in the Echkar Formation and a left maxilla from the Kem Kem Beds, *Rugops* was initially estimated as being 6 metres (19.7 ft) long and 750 kilograms (1,650 lb) in weight based on comparisons with its relatives.[1] Later estimates suggest a revised length of 4.4 metres (14.4 ft).[2] At the same time other authors suggest that it measured 5.3 metres (17.4 ft) long and 410 kilograms (900 lb) in weight.[3] Paul Sereno, who led the team that discovered the fossil, said "It's not the kind of head designed for fighting or bone-crushing", suggesting that it may have been a scavenger.[4] The top of the skull bears two rows of seven holes, each of unknown purpose, although Sereno has speculated that they may have anchored some kind of display crest or horns; based on the presence of grooves for blood vessels forming a pathway into these pits.[5]

Like other abelisaurs, *Rugops* likely had very short, or even vestigial arms. These were probably useless in fighting, and may have only been used to counterbalance the dinosaur's head.

Rugops

Temporal range: Cenomanian

~95 Ma

Pre€ € O S D C P T J K PgN

Restored skull

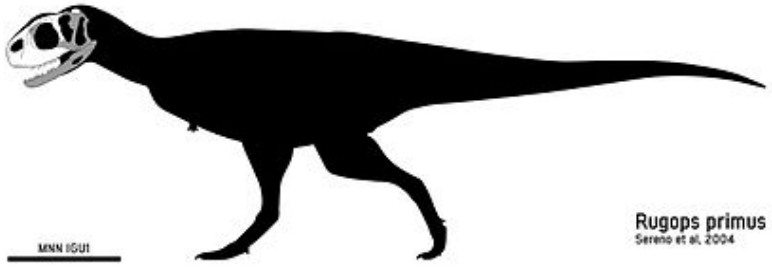
Scientific classification	
Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Clade:	Dinosauria
Clade:	Saurischia
Clade:	Theropoda
Family:	†Abelisauridae
Genus:	†*Rugops* Sereno *et al.* 2004
Species:	†***R. primus***
Binomial name	
†***Rugops primus*** Sereno *et al.* 2004	

Paleoecology

The discovery of *Rugops*'s skull in Niger in 2000 was a crucial breakthrough in the understanding of the evolution of theropods in that area, and demonstrates that this landmass was still united with Gondwana at that stage in history. It lived in the same locality and geological time period as *Spinosaurus*, *Carcharodontosaurus*, and *Deltadromeus*.[5]

See also

- Timeline of ceratosaur research



Skeletal diagram of the holotype and only known specimen: MNN IGU1

References

1. Paul, G.S., 2010, *The Princeton Field Guide to Dinosaurs*, Princeton University Press p. 79
2. Grillo, O. N.; Delcourt, R. (2016). "Allometry and body length of abelisauroid theropods: *Pycnonemosaurus nevesi* is the new king". *Cretaceous Research*. **69**: 71–89. doi:10.1016/j.cretres.2016.09.001 (https://doi.org/10.1016%2Fj.cretres.2016.09.001).
3. Molina-Pérez & Larramendi 2016. *Récords y curiosidades de los dinosaurios Terópodos y otros dinosauromorfos*, Larousse. Barcelona, Spain p. 256
4. https://web.archive.org/web/20060724101122/http://www.scienceinafrica.co.za/2004/june/rugops.htm
5. Sereno, Paul C.; Wilson, Jeffrey A.; Conrad, Jack L. (2004-07-07). "New dinosaurs link southern landmasses in the Mid-Cretaceous" (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1691741). *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*. **271** (1546): 1325–1330. doi:10.1098/rspb.2004.2692 (https://doi.org/10.1098%2Frspb.2004.2692). ISSN 0962-8452 (https://www.worldcat.org/issn/0962-8452). PMC 1691741 (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1691741). PMID 15306329 (https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15306329).

External links

- Project Exploration on *Rugops* (http://www.projectexploration.org/rugops.htm) *Project Exploration news on *Rugops* (http://www.projectexploration.org/news-060204.htm)
- Chicago Park District press release on *Rugops* (http://www.projectexploration.org/newsletters/cpd-rugops-press-release.pdf), PDF format
- Sereno's speculation from "Science in Africa" (https://web.archive.org/web/20060724101122/http://www.scienceinafrica.co.za/2004/june/rugops.htm)
- Artist's impressions of *Rugops*, from Project Exploration (https://web.archive.org/web/20060214230406/http://208.51.67.12/cgi-bin/gallery/imageFolio.cgi?direct=Rugops)
- *Rugops* (http://internt.nhm.ac.uk/jdsml/nature-online/dino-directory/detail.dsml?Genus=Rugops) in the Dino Directory

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